

[7th March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what are the details of the steps proposed to be taken to recruit qualified youth from TN into the Defence Forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The recruitment of sailors in Navy and Airmen in the Air Force is carried out on all India merit basis, and in the case of Army, the recruitment of soldiers in a State is based upon the total vacancies allotted to the State on the basis of Recruitable Male Population (RMP) factor and the fixed class vacancies in a given year. Thus, Tamil Nadu is allotted its due share of vacancies like other states. All vacancies for Tamil Nadu are by and large fully subscribed. However, to ensure that vacancies allotted to each State are utilised by that State, the Government has issued instructions that the allotted quota to a State may not be diverted to any other State in case of some shortfall in the recruitment.

With the introduction of the new recruitment policy with effect from 1st April, 1998, all recruitment is made through open rallies. Regular rallies are held in Tamil Nadu also covering all parts of the State to meet the targeted recruitment. There is no problem in recruitment from Tamil Nadu.

#### **Aero India 2001 Show**

1179. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 150 international and domestic participants took part in the Aero Indian 2001 show inaugurated on the 7th February, 2001 at the Air Force Station, Bangalore;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Chief Minister of Karnataka was not invited for the occasion;

(c) if so, the reasons for not showing courtesy by inviting the Chief Minister of the home State; and

(d) whether Government considers this a violation of the protocol?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The Third International Aero Space Exposition—AERO INDIA 2001—was held at the Air Force Station, Yelahanka (Bangalore) from 7 to 11 February, 2001. The show was inaugurated on 7th February, 2001 at Air Force Station, Yelahanka (Bangalore) by the Raksha Mantri. The first two Aero India shows were also held at the same venue from 1st December to 5th December, 1996 and 8th December to 12th December, 1998 respectively.

The five day long exhibition that concluded on February 11, 2001 attracted 157 International companies from 18 countries. Besides, 71 Indian companies also participated in the show.

As was done on the previous occasion in 1998, a DO letter was addressed to the Chief Minister of Karnataka by Raksha Mantri on 29th January, 2001 intimating him about the forthcoming event and requesting him to make a note of the event and to grace the occasion.

Again on 2nd February, 2001 another DO letter was sent requesting the Chief Minister to grace the occasion as the Guest of Honour and also to address the gathering.

The printed invitation card was also delivered to the Office of the Chief Minister separately.

There was no violation of protocol. A public expression of regret for actions done or not done by the Ministry of Defence in the matter of inviting the Chief Minister was made in his inaugural address by Raksha Mantri.

#### **Steps for strengthening of Kutch Border**

†1180. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether our armed forces posted on borders, especially in the Kutch border are in dire need of better equipments;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to supply the state-of-art equipments;

(c) whether Government have considered the Kutch border seriously which has turned into an easy base of smuggling; and

(d) Government's present and future plans in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The modernisation of country's Armed Forces is a continuous and ongoing process. The requirements of our Armed Forces are reviewed on a continuing basis for induction of modernised weapons and weapon systems keeping in view threat perceptions, the prevailing strategic security environment as also emerging technologies. All formations of the Indian Army including the ones at Kutch are to undergo modernisation in the 10th Army Plan also.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.